

Healthy Utah - A Vegetarian Thanksgiving

Written by Kelli Bradshaw

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Turkey is the main course at Thanksgiving meals in 90% of U.S. households. But if you're part of the 10% who choose to opt for something besides this feathery fowl as a main course, consider these meatless alternatives:

- **Baked pumpkin with root vegetable stew.** This dish combines mushrooms, barley, carrots, parsnips, onions, and chickpeas in a stew served from a hollowed-out and baked pumpkin. The recipe, by Nicole Spiridakis, can be found on the NPR website.
- **Butternut squash with stuffing.** Take four medium-size butternut squash, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of raw wild rice, a cup of chopped red onion, and other spices and ingredients. Then follow the recipe on www.vegkitchen.com/recipes/vegetarian-thanksgiving.htm#2 for a dish that serves eight people.
- **Tofu turkey.** Made from soybean curd, tofu is high in calcium and protein yet low in fat. Numerous recipes are available, including on that feature optional tofu drumsticks, on vegweb.com.
- **Lasagna.** A good, filling entrée that can be prepared with all kinds of vegetables and meat substitutes (like tofu). Spinach, zucchini, and mushrooms are popular ingredients.
- **Winter squash risotto.** Risotto calls for patience and lots of careful stirring, but can result in a satisfying and delicious meal. One medium butternut squash, or 2 to 3 delicata squash, can be used in a risotto recipe found on the Veggie Table Web site (www.theveggietable.com/recipes/wintersquashrisotto.html)

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A vegetarian Thanksgiving isn't a contradiction of terms. The traditional turkey may be a favorite, but you've got other options available that don't force you to compromise your principles or your enjoyment.

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